

Florence-Firestone Community Plan Background Report



Los Angeles County
Department of Regional Planning
December 2010



Contents

| | |
|-------------------------------------|----|
| Introduction | 3 |
| History | 3 |
| Setting | 6 |
| Planning Context | 6 |
| Past Planning Efforts | 7 |
| Technical Reports and Studies | 8 |
| Existing Land Use and Zoning | 14 |
| Demographic Characteristics | 15 |
| Population | 16 |
| Race and Ethnicity | 16 |
| Age Distribution | 16 |
| Births | 17 |
| Population Projections | 17 |
| Mortality | 18 |
| Physical Characteristics | 18 |
| Building Trends | 18 |
| Housing | 19 |
| Stock, Income, Size, Tenure | 19 |
| Projected Housing Needs | 19 |
| Environment | 20 |
| Social and Economic Context | 20 |
| Economic Conditions | 20 |
| Crime Statistics | 20 |

| | |
|---|----|
| Health Indicators | 21 |
| Educational Attainment | 21 |
| Community Facilities, Services and Infrastructure | 22 |
| Community Facilities | 22 |
| Florence-Firestone Community Service Center | 22 |
| Schools | 22 |
| Parks | 23 |
| Library | 23 |
| Health Care Facilities | 24 |
| Services | 24 |
| Sheriff | 24 |
| Fire Protection | 24 |
| Child Care | 24 |
| Infrastructure | 25 |
| Solid Waste Disposal | 25 |
| Transportation | 25 |
| Water Delivery | 25 |
| Sewers | 25 |
| Regulatory Setting | 26 |
| State | 26 |
| County | 27 |
| Community Participation Process | 29 |
| Conclusion | 29 |

Introduction

The unincorporated community of Florence-Firestone is located approximately 6 miles south of Downtown Los Angeles and has an area of 3.6 square miles. Comprised mainly of single-family residential neighborhoods, the community was home to an estimated 63,000 people in 2008.¹

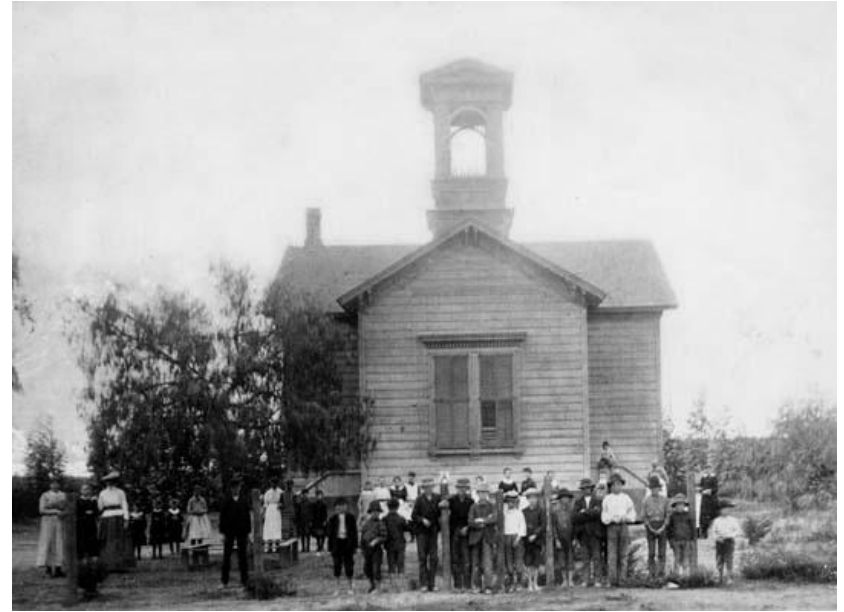
In recent years the community has organized to guide development and services to better meet current and future needs. In 2009, community members collaborated with the Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning to complete a Vision Plan for Florence-Firestone, supported by a Compass Blueprint grant from the Southern California Association of Governments. The Plan was developed through a series of community workshops and defines the community's ideal future. Technical reports based on recommendations in the Vision Plan were completed in 2010, also with the support of a Compass Blueprint Grant. In 2010 the Department of Regional Planning was awarded a Caltrans Community-Based Transportation Planning grant to complete a Community Plan to help realize the vision.

This background report summarizes relevant technical analyses completed to date and provides additional information on the community to support the long-range planning process. It includes background information and facts to enable residents, community stakeholders, and County representatives to work together to develop the Community Plan.

History

Florence-Firestone once contained farmland that yielded abundant crops of sweet potatoes, grain, and corn watered by artesian wells. Grape vineyards were common as were eucalyptus groves planted

for firewood. Farms in the area ranged in size from 40 to several hundred acres. Southern California's fertile soil and favorable climate attracted settlers and, over time, the community's population grew.²



Florence Avenue School, un-credited photo, 1884.

A rail line paralleling Alameda Street from Los Angeles to Wilmington was completed in 1869. The area was connected to the nationwide rail system in 1876 with completion of the trans-continental line. Additional regional connections were established in 1902 with the Pacific Electric inter-urban line, which ran from Los Angeles to Long Beach along Graham Ave.³

¹ US Census, *American Community Survey*, 2006-2008. www.census.gov.

² Regional Planning Commission. *Florence-Firestone Community Study*. Los Angeles, 1970. p. 7.

³ Ibid.

Development initially followed along the railway lines. In the 1800s and early 1900s development was concentrated between Compton Avenue and Alameda Street. In the 1920s it spread eastward and westward and the community was almost completely developed by the 1940s. Many of the structures built between the 1920s and 1940s remain until this day, however small pockets of more recent development exist throughout the community.



U-Line to Florence and Vermont, un-credited photo.

The railway tracks and proximity to ocean ports made Florence-Firestone an ideal location for factories. Manufacturing jobs were abundant in the early 1920s. Goodyear Tire Company opened in 1920 and in 1927 Firestone Tire Manufacturers opened a plant near Firestone Boulevard and Alameda Street. In addition to these tire and rubber plants, steel manufacturers, automobile assembly plants,

derrick and equipment companies, and other manufacturing companies provided a variety of good jobs in the community.⁴

The onset of World War II brought additional manufacturing jobs to the area with the growth of the defense industry. However, after World War II this industry declined and manufacturers transitioned to the auto industry.

In 1948 “whites-only” housing covenants were lifted and African Americans began to purchase homes in the recently desegregated areas of the community. Racial tensions began to grow, eventually leading to violence in the 1950s when White residents bombed, fired into, or burned crosses on the lawns of African American’s homes.⁵ In response, African American boys formed clubs for protection and the first gangs were established.⁶

Deindustrialization began in the community by the 1960s. Factories began to move to outlying areas where there was more space, cheaper land, and less of the perceived ills of the urban core. Residents and retail establishments followed and Florence-Firestone became a “low rent” community. The job base, once supported by a strong factory presence, shifted to low-wage service-sector employment.⁷ At the same time, the community underwent its first major demographic shift. Between 1950 and 1965 the African American population increased from 18% to 57% of the total

⁴ Nicolaieds, Becky. *My Blue Heaven: Life and Politics in the Working-Class Suburbs of Los Angeles, 1920-1925*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002. p. 24 as cited in Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation, *Florence-Firestone Community Parks and Recreation Plan*, 2010.

⁵ Wikipedia. *South Los Angeles*. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/South_Los_Angeles

⁶ Advancement Project. *Los Angeles County Gangs and Violence Reduction Strategy: Florence-Firestone Demonstration Site Community Needs Assessment*. Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, 2009. p. 16.

⁷ Ibid.

population.⁸ Racial tensions persisted and large-scale riots occurred for the first time in 1965 in response to racial injustices and discrimination.⁹

Deindustrialization continued in the 1970s and 1980s, resulting in widespread unemployment. Beginning in the 1970s people from South and Central America immigrated to the community. By 1970 they represented 30% of the total population.¹⁰ The Goodyear and Firestone plants closed in 1982, leading to a massive loss of jobs that further destabilized the area.

The population shifted dramatically again in the 1980s and 1990s. People of Hispanic origin represented 61% of the population in 1980, 77% by 1990, and had reached 86% by 2000.¹¹

In 1990 the Los Angeles Metropolitan Transit Authority opened the Metro Blue Line, the system's first and longest line. The line roughly bisects the community and three stops are located in Florence-Firestone- the Slauson Station, Florence Station, and Firestone Station. The line connects the community to Downtown Los Angeles to the North and the City of Long Beach to the South, providing an important link to jobs and opportunities throughout the Los Angeles region. The line also represents the most major recent infrastructure investment in the community.

In 1992, riots again erupted in the community, in part in response to the acquittal of White police officers accused of beating a Black

motorist after a high-speed pursuit, but also due to a loss of economic opportunities, widespread recession, and a breakdown of social institutions. Lasting six days, the riots ended with 50 people killed, over four thousand injured, 12,000 arrested, and \$1 billion in property damage.¹² In Florence-Firestone, several businesses suffered damage, with losses concentrated heavily in commercial areas along major corridors. Some business owners remained committed to the community though, and reopened businesses only a year after the riots.¹³



Florence and Hoover during Watts Riots, Dave Cicero, 1965.

⁸ Regional Planning Commission. *Florence-Firestone Community Study*. Los Angeles, 1970. p. 24.

⁹ Advancement Project. *Los Angeles County Gangs and Violence Reduction Strategy: Florence-Firestone Demonstration Site Community Needs Assessment*. Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, 2009. p. 16.

¹⁰ Raimi + Associates. *Florence-Firestone Vision Plan*. Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning, 2009. p. 8.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² University of Southern California. *The Los Angeles Riots, 1992*. http://www.usc.edu/libraries/archives/la/la_riot.html.

¹³ Los Angeles County Chief Executive Office. *Florence-Firestone Connection*, 2007. p. 57.



Artwork at Florence Metro Blue Line Station, DRP, 2010.

In an effort to improve services and accountability to the community, in 2002 Los Angeles County formed the Florence-Firestone Community Enhancement Team. Comprised of staff from various County agencies and collaborators from the community, nonprofit organizations, and other stakeholders, the Enhancement Team seeks to provide integrated services and determine priorities for service enhancement. Its completed initiatives include: expansion of park youth programs; initiation of a Sheriff's Special Enforcement Team to abate gang violence; publication of a resource guide, *Community Connection*; coordination of street sweeping, garbage collection and parking enforcement; installation of roadway and pedestrian lighting and 1,450 new street name signs; formation of the first unincorporated area Business Improvement District; formation of a

Community Standards District; and enhancement of code enforcement efforts.¹⁴ The Community Enhancement Team provides a forum for community members and County service providers to come together to frankly discuss issues, identify solutions, and work together for the betterment of the community.

Today, Florence-Firestone is a diverse community with a rich history. Safety, jobs, and deteriorating infrastructure continue to be concerns; however the community has many assets. These include close proximity to jobs, easy access to the region via the Metro Blue Line, successful collaboration between County agencies and community members, many schools, and a youthful population. Planning efforts in the community have sought to build upon these assets, while addressing issues and concerns for current and future residents.

Setting

Florence-Firestone is located approximately six miles south of Downtown Los Angeles. It is surrounded on the north, south, and west by the City of Los Angeles, and on the east by the Cities of Huntington Park and South Gate and the unincorporated community of Walnut Park.

The community is mostly urbanized and developed with single-family residences, local serving commercial uses, and industrial uses such as recycling and automobile dismantling facilities (See Map 1: Context).

Planning Context

Although zoning was established in the community as early as the 1920s, Florence-Firestone does not have an adopted Community Plan. Past physical changes have occurred following the broad

¹⁴ Los Angeles County Chief Executive Office. Enhancing Community Access to County Services. <http://ceo.lacounty.gov/ouas/goal6.htm#CommWeb>.

direction provided in the Los Angeles County General Plan. Planning efforts over the years have attempted to assess the development of the past, evaluate current needs, and anticipate and plan for future changes to enhance community quality of life.

Past Planning Efforts

Florence-Firestone has been the subject of several studies and reports conducted by Los Angeles County, dating back to the 1970s. In 1970 and 1971, the community was one of two Model Neighborhoods under Los Angeles County's Model Cities program administered by the Department of Urban Affairs.¹⁵ This program sought to coordinate urban services. A background study and staff report was developed, with the intent of adopting a community general plan. However, no local plan was adopted as a result of these efforts, perhaps due to a lack of continued funding for the program or because two freeways that the plan was focused on (the east-west Route 90 along Slauson Avenue and the north-south Route 47 along Industrial) were never built.

More recently, the Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning adopted a Community Standards District (2004) and Transit Oriented District (2005 and 2006). The intent of the Community Standards District (Section 22.44.138 of the Los Angeles County Zoning Code) is to "improve the appearance of the community and to promote the maintenance of structures and surrounding properties." The Transit Oriented District (Section 22.44.400 of the Los Angeles County Zoning Code) seeks to "promote transit-oriented and pedestrian-oriented development, to increase transit use, to manage traffic congestion, and to improve air quality."

¹⁵ Regional Planning Commission. *Florence Firestone Community General Plan Staff Report*, 1971. Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors. p. 2.



Florence-Firestone Vision Plan workshop, DRP, 2009.

While these ordinances established the regulatory framework for land use, the community still lacked an overall, comprehensive policy to guide future growth and development. Recognizing this, in 2008-2009 the Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning collaborated with the Florence-Firestone Community Leaders to develop a Vision Plan. Supported by a grant from the Southern California Association of Governments, the Department of Regional Planning hired a consultant team, Raimi + Associates, for the project. From November 2008 to March 2009 over a hundred residents, businesses, and other stakeholders in Florence-Firestone participated in a series of workshops and meetings to develop the vision. The Florence-Firestone Vision Plan was completed in June 2009 and includes a vision statement and list of implementation actions for

several topics and geographic areas. These are: socio-economics, physical, Florence Mile and Blue Line Station, center of the community, neighborhoods and housing, Firestone station area, corridors, Alameda corridor and industrial areas, jobs and economic development, transportation, parks and open space, and administrative and community activities.

In addition to defining the vision statements and proposing a list of actions to achieve them, the Vision Plan identified areas in need of additional study and evaluation. Specifically, the Vision Plan actions include: prepare a business development and attraction strategy; prepare a comprehensive market and industrial analysis; prepare a retail demand study and attraction strategy; prepare a station improvement plan; review general plan and zoning districts; review transit oriented districts; and, prepare a community plan.

Technical Reports and Studies

Based on the recommendations for further study in the Vision Plan, in 2009 the Department of Regional Planning, with the support of the Southern California Association of Governments, hired a consultant team, URS, Inc., to prepare three reports: industrial and retail market feasibility analysis; land use and sustainability; and, transit-oriented development. These reports were completed in 2010 and are summarized below. The complete reports can be found on the Department's website at <http://planning.lacounty.gov>.

Industrial and Retail Market Feasibility Analysis

The purpose of this report was to identify the current market state, opportunities and constraints, and consumer expenditure patterns in Florence-Firestone in order to develop an industrial and retail business development and attraction plan. The report also provides strategic recommendations regarding current and future commercial, retail, and industrial development.

Currently, Florence-Firestone has a workforce with low educational attainment and incomes, decades of deferred maintenance for structures, conflicts between land uses, obsolete retail and industrial building stock, high rental housing rates and low affordability. Incomes are relatively low compared with the County overall. Land aggregation and small parcel sizes limit new retail and industrial development.

Opportunities to enhance retail and industrial uses were evaluated using location quotients (measures of a region's specialization in industry), evaluation of the building stock, extent and utilization of property, spending patterns, areas of leakage, gap analysis, employment patterns, and opportunity sites.

For the retail market, the report concludes that opportunity exists to expand and build upon agglomeration effects in motor vehicle dealers (other than traditional vehicles), auto parts and accessories, specialty food retailing and catering, full service restaurants, gardening and nursery supply, photographic equipment, books and prerecorded equipment, and movie theaters. The industrial market analysis finds that the market for new industrial development is weak and recommends working with existing businesses to strengthen their revenue-generating and employment capacity.

Based on these findings, the report recommends several general strategies to support economic development. These include:

- Employee training: The report identifies the lack of a skilled workforce as a disadvantage for Florence-Firestone. Technical training programs are recommended to build on and update skills already present.
- Small business assistance program: Most businesses in Florence-Firestone are small and independently owned. These businesses could benefit from programs sponsored by

the US Small Business Administration and administered by the Small Business Development Centers (SBDC). These centers help business owners apply for and secure funds to expand or create new businesses. Currently no center offers services to Florence-Firestone. The report suggests that the County approach the SBDC Regional Office in Long Beach about devising a program specifically for Florence-Firestone.

- Micro-lending program: Grameen Bank pioneered micro-lending in Bangladesh and has successfully expanded its model over the last thirty years. Loans provided are small but require no collateral and are focused on providing credit to those who would not otherwise be able to access it. Recently, Grameen opened a west coast branch in San Francisco. The report recommends that the County approach Grameen about establishing a bank in Florence-Firestone to expand access to credit and support small, start-up businesses.
- California Industrial Development Bonds: These bonds include a Small Business Program to provide a streamlined process for small businesses to access industrial development bonds. These bonds provide up to \$4 million for land acquisition, building construction or renovation, and the purchase of equipment, among other uses.
- Special zone designations: These designations offer various benefits to business owners. Florence-Firestone is currently part of a HUBZone and Recycling Market Development Zone. The HUBZone gives firms located in Florence-Firestone preferential consideration in federal government contracting. The Recycling Market Development Zone assists residents and businesses throughout the County to recycle by targeting technical assistance and financing opportunities. Florence-Firestone could also benefit from a Foreign Trade

Zone, which allows businesses certain tax advantages, and an Enterprise Zone, which allows tax advantages and deductions. Community Development Block Grants are also targeted at Enterprise Zones.

In addition to these general strategies, the report identifies recommendations specific to Florence-Firestone. The retail strategies are:

- Place branding and promotion campaign: Establish a branding committee to promote Florence-Firestone as a destination for specialized goods and services, including auto parts, repair, and customization; Latino specialty foods; and furniture and home furnishings.
- Transit-oriented district commercial revitalization program: Retain and grow the local retail and commercial businesses in the TODs through marketing, code enforcement, and establishing an advisory committee.
- Façade improvement program in TODs: Establish design themes for each TOD and conduct outreach to encourage businesses to participate in façade improvement.
- Centralized parking plan: Develop public or shared parking facilities to provide visitors with one-stop parking.
- Transit-oriented district plans: Improve Blue Line stations to encourage use of transit and to attract transit users from other areas to Florence-Firestone.

The industrial strategies are:

- Establish and promote the green/recycling zone: Improve the area's "green" image to promote the Alameda corridor as a successful green business location.

- Green/recycling zone façade art program for area youth and schools: Upgrade the appearance of recycling and salvage companies through a façade art contest for area youth and schools.
- Business assistance program: Grow and retain existing businesses through outreach programs, support, and needs-assessments.
- Workforce development: Update the skills of the existing labor force and prepare the emerging workforce for positions in high-growth industries through training, job fairs, education campaigns, and a “local hire” strategy.
- Redevelopment project area designation: Provide tax increment funding to eliminate blight in Florence-Firestone.



Industrial areas adjacent to Slauson Station, DRP, 2010.

While Florence-Firestone faces many challenges to economic development, including a relatively low-skilled work force and aging and in some cases obsolete infrastructure, implementation of the strategies identified above have the potential to enhance the community’s assets, spur investment, and encourage economic growth.

Land Use and Sustainability Report

This report recommends strategies for sustainable land use within the community. Sustainability is defined in the report as “the long-term social, economic, and environmental health of a community,” or “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” Sustainability indicators were developed based on the community’s vision and the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design for Neighborhood Development (LEED-ND) criteria. Existing conditions were evaluated based on these criteria. Next, alternative land use scenarios were developed to improve mobility, access, and safety while maximizing the community’s assets, particularly its potential for transit-oriented development along the Blue Line rail corridor.

The report begins with a discussion of existing conditions as they relate to land use. Residential uses consist mostly of densely concentrated single-family homes. Many residential units are overcrowded due to garage conversions. Higher density residential uses exist near major intersections and generally are in need of structural and landscape improvements. Commercial areas include a mix of small retailers and auto-oriented shops located along major streets. Industrial areas are generally located along the eastern and northern boundaries of the community on the major corridors of Slauson Avenue, Central Avenue, Wilmington Avenue, and Alameda

St. Public and community-serving uses are disbursed throughout the community and include public schools, libraries, and the Florence Activity Center. Open space is also fairly evenly distributed in the community and includes five parks totaling 70.7 acres.

Existing conditions are evaluated based on four main categories of sustainability: mobility and access; reducing automobile dependence; housing diversity and affordability; and, safety.

In terms of mobility and access, Florence-Firestone exceeds some criteria while not meeting others. A very small percentage of the community (18% of residential acreage) has access to civic space, public space, park or recreation areas, or recreational facilities from schools. Twenty percent of residential acreage is within a ¼ mile of recreational facility or green space located on public school property. Green streets also provide a potential recreation area for pedestrians. Tree shading on streets was evaluated as a percent of street tree coverage compared to the total street length. Of the major streets evaluated, six met the criteria of having at least 40% street coverage (Compton Avenue, Firestone Boulevard, Florence Avenue, Miramonte Boulevard, Holmes Avenue, and Hooper Avenue) and five did not (Nadeau Street, Santa Fe Avenue, Slauson Avenue, Graham Avenue, and Crockett Boulevard).

The community performed better when measured against indicators related to reducing automobile dependence. Florence-Firestone is well served by both light rail with the Metro Blue Line and buses. However, there is a great need for improved access to bicycle networks. Currently only 8.6% of all residential areas can access a bicycle network within a ¼ mile distance. The community contains an appropriate mix of residential, industrial, and commercial uses to provide adequate jobs for residents in close proximity to homes.

While current residential development is mostly single-family in nature, the community has the potential to provide a diverse mix of housing. Based on an analysis of maximum residential development potential using adopted residential zones, the community has the potential to provide a diversity of housing types for a mix of incomes and households. Currently most residentially-designated areas are built below the maximums allowed by zoning and consist mainly of single-family neighborhoods. The median household value in Florence-Firestone is also lower than the County average. For-sale housing was found to be affordable for those earning up to 120% of median income (\$33,274 in 2009), but not for those earning 80% of area median income.

Finally, Florence-Firestone has a very high crime rate. Crimes ranging from homicide to petty theft occur throughout the community. Currently, improvements are needed in public safety.

The report concludes by presenting three hypothetical land use scenarios for improving mobility and access, automobile dependence, housing diversity and affordability, and safety. Low, medium, and high degrees of change are presented to demonstrate how different, phased levels of implementation can meet or exceed the sustainability thresholds. Proposals include expanding and improving bike routes, sidewalks, intersections, street trees, and street lighting to provide more recreation space, improve the pedestrian and cyclist environment, provide a diverse array of housing and jobs, and improve safety. The land use scenarios provide various options to be considered and refined as part of the community planning process.

Transit-Oriented Development Evaluation

The purpose of this report is to analyze the adopted Los Angeles County Transit Oriented District (TOD) ordinance and to identify amendments needed to further support transit-oriented

development within Florence-Firestone. Based on an evaluation of existing conditions, the adopted TOD ordinance, and best practices, the report presents a series of recommendations to enable transit-oriented-development within the station areas.

Florence-Firestone contains three TODs at the Slauson, Florence, and Firestone station areas. Adopted in 2005 the ordinances address various topics, such as graffiti removal, uses allowed by right and with permits, mixed-use development, architectural styles and colors, building heights, and parking requirements within a roughly quarter mile area from each station. Despite these regulations, there are currently no existing transit-oriented developments around the three stations.

In general, existing conditions around the station areas are in need of improvement. A large number of bus stops lack basic amenities such as benches, shelters, sufficient lighting, and transit information. Light-rail stations lack a sense of security. As identified during community workshops for the Vision Plan, passengers feel isolated and vulnerable and find the stations aesthetically unappealing. The majority of sidewalks are uneven due to normal wear-and-tear and the presence of sloped driveways passing through sidewalks into adjacent parking lots. The following conditions exist in the station areas:

- Slauson Station: Industrial and residential uses are located within the TOD areas. These include single-family and lower-density multi-family developments. Net residential density is approximately 15 units per acre. In contrast to this existing development, the zoning in the station area supports more commercial development and higher-density residential development. Existing uses along major corridors are industrial and lack pedestrian-oriented amenities. Mobility is

limited by one entrance point to the station, at-grade railroad tracks, and a lack of sidewalks along the north side of Slauson Avenue.



Existing pedestrian bridge to Blue Line Station, DRP, 2009.

- Florence-Station: Industrial uses are limited and commercial uses are located on both sides of Florence Avenue. Single-family residences comprise over half of the area within the transit-oriented district. Net residential density is approximately 12 units per acre. Current zoning designations support higher density commercial and residential development. Land around the station is underutilized, for example large portions of parcels are used for surface parking. Pedestrian access to the station is limited and railroad crossings pose safety concerns and limit mobility.

- Firestone Station: The majority of land uses are a mix of medium-density, single-family residences with a commercial strip along Firestone Boulevard. Net residential density is approximately 12 units per acre. Industrial uses are located along the east side of the rail corridor. Zoning designations in the station area would allow for higher density commercial and residential development. Commercial uses with street-facing facades are interrupted by surface parking lots and uses adjacent to the tracks have large, blank walls. All but one surrounding bus stops lack shelters and some do not offer benches. Access to the station is limited and there are pedestrian safety issues.

The report proposes specific improvements in five categories to enhance transit-oriented development in the station areas: street network and parking, public transit, bicycle facilities, pedestrian facilities, land use, and community design.

1. Street network and parking: Include trees and landscaping along key corridors, correct street discontinuities, designate municipal parking districts, institute permit parking on residential streets, and charge for parking whenever possible.
2. Public transit: Address safety concerns at stations, provide additional bus shelters and amenities.
3. Bicycle facilities: Expand upon the existing bicycle network, prioritize construction of bikeways based on access to major destinations, install bicycle racks and lockers at locations with high bicycle traffic, and ensure that future development around stations accommodates the inclusion of new bicycle lanes.
4. Pedestrian facilities: Improve existing pedestrian bridge and construct new ones, widen sidewalks, install pedestrian-scale lighting, enhance safety and visibility of motorists at

pedestrian crossings, install bus shelters and benches at heavily utilized bus stops.

5. Land use and community design: Encourage construction of new mixed-use developments, require that entrances to new development front the sidewalk, provide plaza areas and open spaces in TODs, ensure adequate transition from high-density, multi-story buildings to single-family residential areas, and maintain the existing warehouse and industrial land uses.

In addition to these proposed improvements, the report evaluates the adopted TOD ordinance to determine whether it supports or hinders transit-oriented development and to recommend revisions where necessary. Existing development standards are evaluated, including parking requirements, signs, sidewalks and landscaping, wall materials, land use, lot coverage/density, and height restrictions. Additionally, specific uses are evaluated within open space, residential, and commercial zones. For each standard or zone, the report suggests revisions to the adopted ordinance to further encourage transit-oriented development. For example, establishing parking maximums instead of minimums, allowing more flexibility in sign and awning design, requiring bike racks for new development, eliminating setback requirements and limits on yard encroachments, increasing maximum height limits, and rezoning in specific areas. The report also identifies areas where no regulations exist in the Zoning Ordinance and recommends language for inclusion. These include creating new zone districts specific to TOD areas (rather than the current zoning overlay approach), establishing a shared parking strategy, developing a system to track community comments, forming a TOD taskforce to monitor progress, and creating a redevelopment area.

Parks and Recreation Plan

In addition to these technical reports, the Vision Plan also spurred discussion and additional evaluation of community parks, resulting in the preparation of a Draft Community Parks and Recreation Plan. The goals of the plan were to foster efficient capital improvement programs for parks, provide direction for new park planning, and promote responsible stewardship of existing resources. The Plan is based on extensive public involvement that included interviews, workshops, surveys, and collaboration with County agencies. The Plan found that Florence-Firestone has a deficit of parkland (245 acres of local parkland and 343 acres of regional parkland). It identifies opportunities for future parks, including vacant land, joint use with school sites, utility corridors, and rights-of-way.

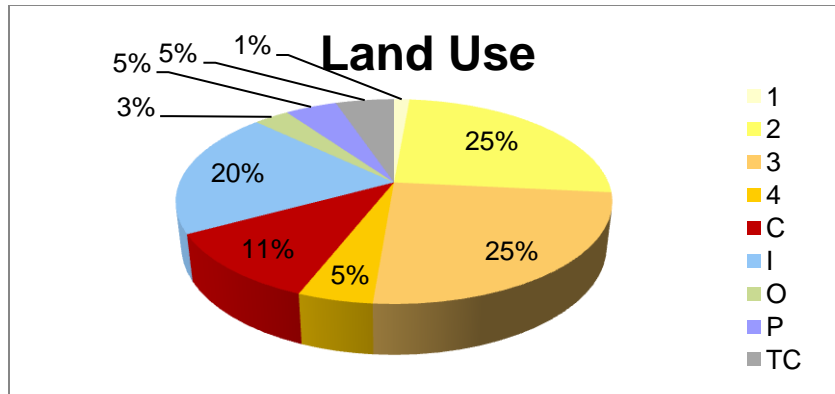
Existing Land Use and Zoning

Land use and zoning determine what types of uses can be developed in a community and where these uses can occur. While land use provides the overall policy, allowable density, and general intent for each parcel of land, zoning requirements dictate more specific regulations for development standards, uses permitted by right, and uses that require permits. Land use maps are typically found in land use plans, such as the General Plan or Community Plans, while zoning maps and associated requirements are found in the Zoning Code.

The Los Angeles County General Plan contains the land use policy map for Florence-Firestone. Adopted in 1980, this Plan designates most of the land in the community as low and medium density residential. Land use designations in the northwest of the community allow slightly more density than those in the southeast. Commercially-designated areas generally run on either side of major

corridors, including Compton Avenue, Florence Avenue, Firestone Avenue, and Nadeau Street. Industrially designated areas run along Alameda Street, the Metro Blue Line, and Slauson Avenue. Open Space and Public designated lands are scattered throughout the community and consist mainly of parks, schools, and other public facilities (See Map 2: Land Use).

| Land Use | Total Acreage | Percentage |
|--|---------------|------------|
| 1- Low Density Residential (1-6 du/ac) | 31.78 | 1.37% |
| 2- Low/Medium Density Residential (6-12 du/ac) | 582.66 | 25.19% |
| 3- Medium Density Residential (12-22 du/ac) | 571.67 | 24.72% |
| 4- High Density Residential 22 or more du/ac) | 108.43 | 4.69% |
| C- Major Commercial | 256.75 | 11.10% |
| I- Major Industrial | 463.10 | 20.02% |
| O- Open Space | 72.32 | 3.13% |
| P- Public and Semi-Public Facilities | 106.27 | 4.59% |
| TC- Transportation Corridor | 119.87 | 5.18% |



Per California law, zoning must be consistent with land use. In Florence-Firestone, zoning patterns generally follow land use designations. As seen in the table below, most of the community is zoned R-2 (two-family residence) or R-3 (limited multiple residence). These zones account for over 60% of the total community acreage, followed by M-2 (heavy manufacturing), M-I (light manufacturing), and C-3 (unlimited commercial).

| Zone | Name | Total Acreage | Percentage |
|------------|--------------------------------|---------------|------------|
| Zone A-1 | Light agriculture | 8.1 | 0.48% |
| Zone C-2 | Neighborhood commercial | 34.2 | 2.02% |
| Zone C-3 | Unlimited commercial | 147.1 | 8.70% |
| Zone C-M | Commercial manufacturing | 33.9 | 2.00% |
| Zone CPD | Commercial planned development | 0.8 | 0.05% |
| Zone M-1 | Light manufacturing | 148.1 | 8.76% |
| Zone M-1.5 | Restricted heavy manufacturing | 1.2 | 0.07% |
| Zone M-2 | Heavy manufacturing | 152.7 | 9.03% |
| Zone M-3 | Unclassified | 8.7 | 0.51% |
| Zone O-S | Open space | 68.1 | 4.03% |

| | | | |
|--------------|---------------------------------|-------|--------|
| Zone R-1 | Single-family residence | 14.9 | 0.88% |
| Zone R-2 | Two-family residence | 409 | 24.19% |
| Zone R-3-()U | Limited multiple residence | 595.9 | 35.24% |
| Zone R-4-()U | Unlimited residence | 62.7 | 3.71% |
| Zone RPD | Residential planned development | 5.5 | 0.33% |

Generally mirroring the land use designations, the community is mostly zoned residential with commercial zoning along major corridors, manufacturing zoning along Alameda Street, and a few other areas, and open space zoning in several areas in the community (See Map 3: Zoning).

The majority of community acreage (83.3%) has zoning that is consistent with land use designations. Only 15.3% of acreage has inconsistent zoning and land use, and 1.4% is undetermined. As seen on the maps below, areas where zoning is inconsistent with land use occur in Public land use designated areas with residential zoning, Residential land use designated areas with commercial zoning, and in areas where zoning permits higher density development than land designations allow (See Maps 4: Zoning and Land Use and Map 5: Zoning and Land Use Consistency).

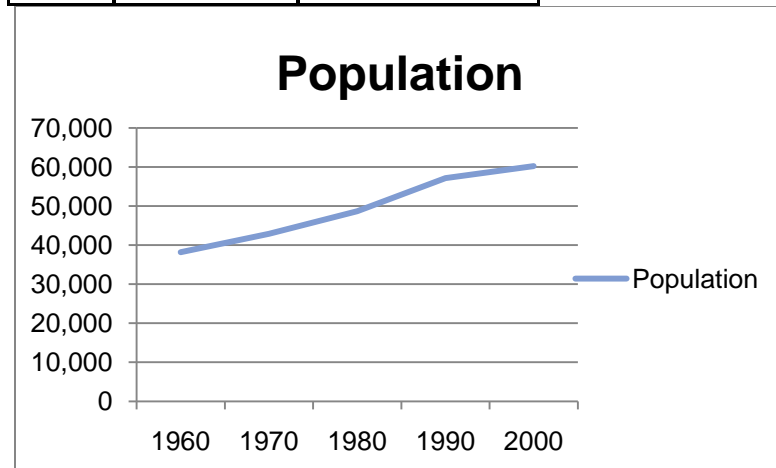
Demographic Characteristics

Planning seeks to anticipate and guide future development and services to best meet people's needs today and in the future. As such, an understanding of a community's population, age distribution, and other demographic characteristics is necessary to accurately plan for future needs. This section provides detailed information on Florence-Firestone's population, including estimates and projections of how it may change in the future.

Population

Florence-Firestone had an estimated population of 63,143 in 2008, a slight increase over the population in 2000 of 60,197.¹⁶ With over 17,000 persons per acre, the community has a higher population density than nearby cities. As shown in the table and chart below, the population grew an average of 14% every ten years from 1960 to 1990. Population growth slowed to only 5.3% between 1990 and 2000.

| Population Trends | | |
|-------------------|------------|----------------|
| Year | Population | Percent Change |
| 1960 | 38,164 | — |
| 1970 | 42,895 | 12.4% |
| 1980 | 48,662 | 13.4% |
| 1990 | 57,147 | 17.4% |
| 2000 | 60,197 | 5.3% |



¹⁶ All demographic data from US Census, www.census.gov.

Race and Ethnicity

As discussed above, Florence-Firestone has undergone dramatic demographic shifts over its history. Today the community's population is composed mainly of people of Hispanic or Latino origin, as shown in the table below. 86% of the population is of Hispanic or Latino origin. The predominant country of origin among Hispanics and Latinos is Mexico, representing 78% of Florence-Firestone's total Hispanic or Latino population.

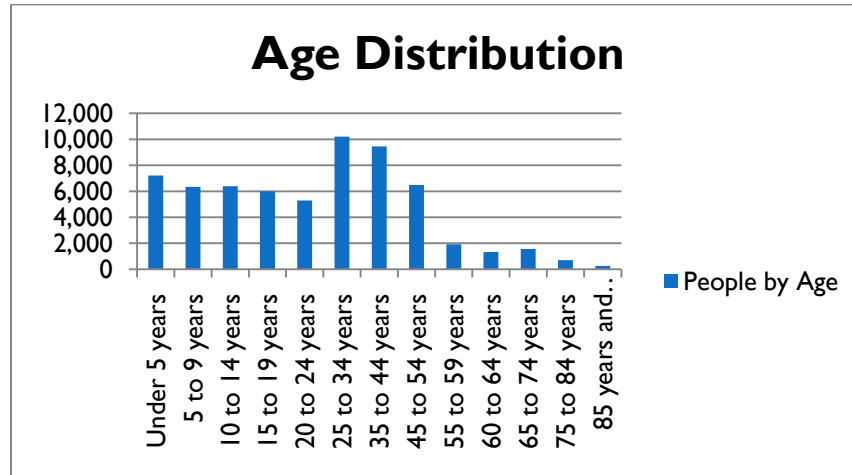
| Race | | |
|--|--------|-------|
| White | 38,920 | 61.6% |
| Black or African American | 7,279 | 11.5% |
| American Indian and Alaska Native | 847 | 1.3% |
| Asian | N | N |
| Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander | N | N |
| Some other race | 16,949 | 26.8% |
| Hispanic or Latino Race | | |
| Hispanic or Latino (of any race) | N | N |
| Mexican | 49,294 | 78.1% |
| Puerto Rican | 131 | 0.2% |
| Cuban | 0 | 0.0% |
| Other Hispanic or Latino | 5,798 | 9.2% |

Age Distribution

As shown in the table and chart below, the community has a relatively young population, with 65% of the population under the age of 35.

| Age | | |
|---------------|----------|---------|
| | Estimate | Percent |
| Under 5 years | 7,207 | 11.4% |
| 5 to 9 years | 6,340 | 10.0% |

| | | |
|-------------------|--------|-------|
| 10 to 14 years | 6,389 | 10.1% |
| 15 to 19 years | 6,000 | 9.5% |
| 20 to 24 years | 5,298 | 8.4% |
| 25 to 34 years | 10,211 | 16.2% |
| 35 to 44 years | 9,457 | 15.0% |
| 45 to 54 years | 6,486 | 10.3% |
| 55 to 59 years | 1,923 | 3.0% |
| 60 to 64 years | 1,325 | 2.1% |
| 65 to 74 years | 1,556 | 2.5% |
| 75 to 84 years | 694 | 1.1% |
| 85 years and over | 257 | 0.4% |



Births

Florence-Firestone falls within the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health's Service Planning Area (SPA) 6. During 1999, there were 22,889 live births in SPA 6. The racial/ethnic composition of live births was 73% Latino, 24% African American, 2% White, and 1% Asian/Pacific Islander. Florence-Firestone had a relatively high level of births to adolescent mothers, with a rate of 70 births to adolescent

mothers per 1,000 live births. The rate of mothers receiving late prenatal care per 1,000 delivering mothers was also highest in Florence-Firestone, with a rate of 239, when compared to other cities and communities within SPA 6.¹⁷

Population Projections

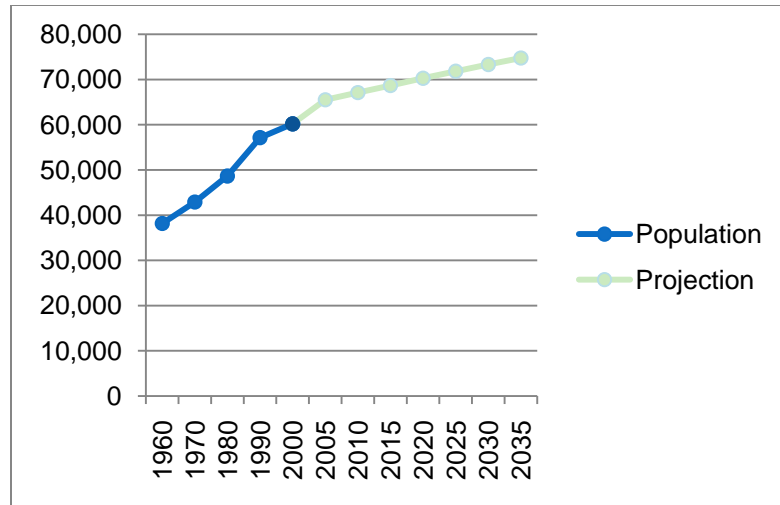
Population projections for the Southern California region are provided by the Southern California Association of Governments in its Regional Transportation Plan. The most recent Regional Transportation Plan estimates a 2% population increase every five years in Florence-Firestone from 2005 to 2035. This somewhat modest projected increase reflects the fact that the community is fully developed and highly dense, limiting large future growth in population.

| Year | Population ¹⁸ | Percent Increase |
|------|--------------------------|------------------|
| 1960 | 38,164 | |
| 1970 | 42,895 | 12% |
| 1980 | 48,662 | 13% |
| 1990 | 57,147 | 17% |
| 2000 | 60,197 | 5% |
| 2005 | 65,527 | 9% |
| 2010 | 67,110 | 2% |
| 2015 | 68,675 | 2% |
| 2020 | 70,284 | 2% |
| 2025 | 71,834 | 2% |
| 2030 | 73,324 | 2% |
| 2035 | 74,746 | 2% |

¹⁷ Los Angeles County Department of Public Health.

http://www.lapublichealth.org/spa6/stats/spa6_stats_mental_and_infant_health.htm

¹⁸ US Census through 2000. SCAG 2007 RTP for projections through 2035. (census tracts 5327, 5328, 5329, 5330, 5349, 5350, 5351.01, 5351.02, 5352, 5353, 5354)



Mortality

The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health provides data on mortality within Los Angeles County. Mortality is measured through a method that combines premature mortality and morbidity into a single measure of burden known as Disability Adjusted Life Years (DALYs).

Of the ten leading causes of disease burden in SPA 6, homicide/violence was the leading cause (12,099 DALYs), followed by coronary heart disease (8,536 DALYs), diabetes mellitus (7,286 DALYs), alcohol dependence (6,750 DALYs), stroke (5,213 DALYs), depression (4,016 DALYs), motor vehicle crashes (3,675 DALYs), trachea/bronchus/lung cancer (3,618 DALYs), emphysema (3,240 DALYs), and osteoarthritis (3,236 DALYs).¹⁹ Combined, these causes significantly shorten the lives of people living in SPA 6, which includes Florence-Firestone.

¹⁹

http://www.lapublichealth.org/spa6/stats/spa6_stats_burden_of_disease_and_injury.htm

Physical Characteristics

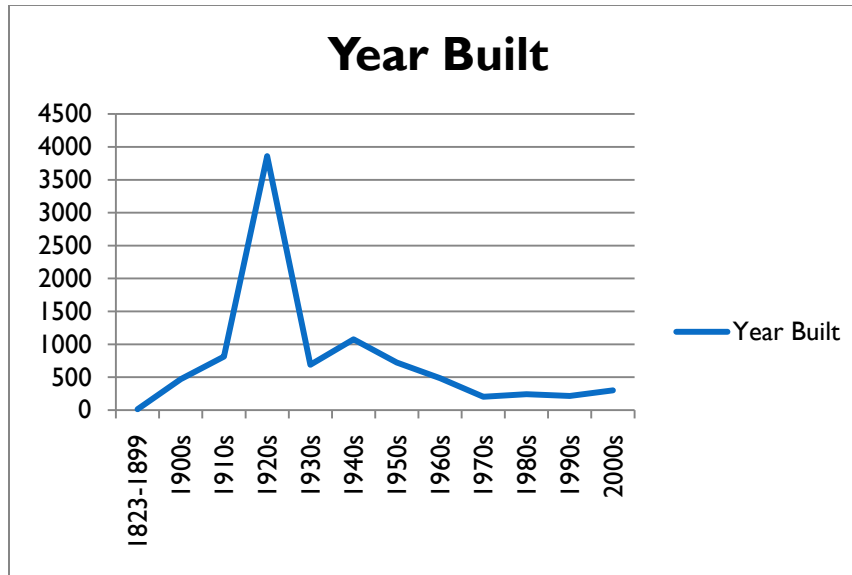
Data pertaining to the built environment is also relevant when planning for the future. Data on a community's building stock, housing, and open space is necessary to adequately provide for future uses and balance potentially competing needs. This section provides information on building trends, housing, and environmental conditions to help inform land use decisions.

Building Trends

As seen in the chart and table below, development in Florence-Firestone reached its peak in the 1920s.²⁰ At that time, land was abundant and newly established manufacturing plants attracted many workers. Development dropped significantly in the 1930s. The economic boost of the Second World War caused a slight increase in development; however, the number of buildings constructed per year has decreased steadily since then.

| Year Built | Number of Units |
|--------------|-----------------|
| 1823-1899 | 13 |
| 1900s | 470 |
| 1910s | 814 |
| 1920s | 3861 |
| 1930s | 690 |
| 1940s | 1077 |
| 1950s | 723 |
| 1960s | 486 |
| 1970s | 202 |
| 1980s | 241 |
| 1990s | 216 |
| 2000s | 300 |
| Total | 9093 |

²⁰ Los Angeles County Assessor Tax Roll, 2009.



As seen on the Year Built map, the majority of Florence-Firestones building stock dates to the 1920s and 1940s, with more recent development scattered throughout the community (See Map 6: Year Built).

Housing Stock, Income, Size, Tenure

According to the US Census, there are 14,928 housing units in Florence-Firestone. Of these, 73% are single-family attached or detached. Of multi-family housing, 4.8% have 2 units, 10% have 3 or 4 units, 6.5% have 5 to 9 units, 1.6% have between 10 and 19 units, and only 2.7% have 20 units or more. This development pattern is depicted in the map below. As shown, the majority of the community is comprised of parcels with one unit each (See Map 7: Density).

Housing stock in the community is fairly old, with 29% of units being built in 1939 or earlier, 53% built between 1940 and 1989, and only 7.6% built after 1990. The community is predominantly a renter area,

with 62% of housing being renter occupied and 38% being owner occupied. A large share of the community, 14.6% have no vehicles available per household. Residents in Florence-Firestone also spend a large portion of their income on housing. 55% of owners spend 35% or more of their household income on housing. Among renters the figure is even higher, with 57% of renters spending 35% or more of their income on rent.²¹

| | Estimate | Percent |
|--|----------|---------|
| Total housing units | 14,928 | |
| Occupied housing units | 13,785 | 92.3 |
| Owner-occupied housing units | 5,257 | 38.1 |
| Renter-occupied housing units | 8,528 | 61.9 |
| Vacant housing units | 1,143 | 7.7 |
| Owner-occupied homes | 5,257 | |
| Median value (dollars) | 392,900 | (X) |
| Median of selected monthly owner costs | | |
| With a mortgage (dollars) | 1,713 | (X) |
| Not mortgaged (dollars) | 336 | (X) |

Projected Housing Needs

In 2008, Florence-Firestone had an average household size of 4.58 persons per household. Using this average household size and the Southern California Association of Governments 2008 Regional Transportation Plan population projections, the following table details the projected housing needs in the community. Based on the US Census estimates, the community had 14,928 units in 2008. In order to provide adequate housing for projected future residents

²¹ US Census. www.census.gov.

until 2035, the Community Plan would therefore need to allow for an additional 1,392 units.

| Year | Projected Housing Need |
|------|------------------------|
| 2015 | 14,994 |
| 2020 | 15,346 |
| 2025 | 15,684 |
| 2030 | 16,010 |
| 2035 | 16,320 |

Environment

Florence-Firestone is located in a developed, urban area and does not contain any prime farmland, is not in a flood zone, potential tsunami inundation zone, or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone. The community does not contain fault traces and is not in a landslide or seismic zone, however the majority of the community is in a liquefaction zone, meaning that soil stability must be investigated for the design and construction of buildings for human occupancy.

According to the Natural Diversity Database, a program that inventories the status and locations of rare plants and animals in California, the northern portion of the community (north of 65th St.) may be habitat for the American badger, southwestern willow flycatcher, and burrowing owl.

The community is relatively flat, ranging from 110 feet above sea level in the south to 175 feet above sea level in the north, according to the United States Geologic Service Quad Map.²²

²² Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning, *E-Net*, 2010.

Social and Economic Context

The socio-economic context of the community provides valuable information for planning future uses and services. This section provides information on economic conditions, crime statistics, health, and education.

Economic Conditions

According to the United States Census, approximately 61% of Florence-Firestone's population is in the labor force. The majority of workers are employed in production, transportation, and material moving occupations (34%), followed by sales and office (24%), service occupations (18%), construction, extraction, maintenance, and repair (12%), and management, professional, and related occupations (11%).

The highest represented industries are manufacturing (24%), retail trade (12%), and educational services, healthcare, and social assistance (11%). Average household income in 2008 adjusted dollars was \$44,636. 28% of families and 31% of all people reported incomes below the poverty level at some point during the year in 2008.²³

Crime Statistics

SPA 6, which includes Florence-Firestone, fares among the worst in the County in terms of people's reports on the built environment. Only 57% of adults believe their neighborhood is safe from crime and 76% report there are safe places to be physically active in their community. Among parents of children up to age 17, 62% say children can easily get to a safe place to play.²⁴

These perceptions are largely borne out in data on crimes. In the six months from April to October 2010, 440 violent crimes and 606 property crimes were committed in Florence-Firestone, resulting in

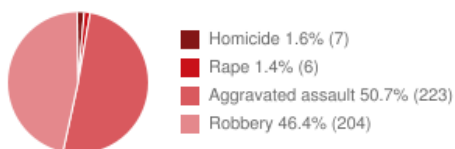
²³ US Census American Community Survey. census.gov.

²⁴ Los Angeles County Department of Public Health
<http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/docs/keyindicators.pdf>

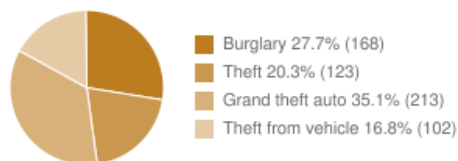
173.9 crimes per 10,000 people. This rate was higher than the nearby communities of Central-Alameda, Lynwood, Walnut Park, and South Park, but lower than Green Meadows and Watts. Florence-Firestone ranks 19th among 272 Los Angeles County communities in terms of number of violent crimes per capita and 101th among 272 Los Angeles County communities in terms of property crimes.²⁵

Crime types

Violent crimes (440)



Property crimes (606)



Health Indicators

SPA 6 performs better than the County Average for some health indicators but worse for others. 27% of adults rate the quality of fresh fruits and vegetables where they shop as high. Among parents of children up to age 17, 68% say their community is a pleasant place for children to be physically active. 87% of children ages 2-17 eat breakfast daily, the highest in the county. Consumption of fruits and vegetables a day is low, with only 13% of adults eating five servings a day. Meanwhile, consumption of fast food and soda is high. Among adults, 42% eat fast food once a week and 56% drink soda once a day. Among children, 52% eat fast food at least once a week and 55% drink soda once a day. Tobacco use is high among adults, at 20%.

Physical activity is low in SPA 6 as it is throughout the County. Only 51% of adults and 34% of children obtain the recommended amount of exercise each week, while 39% of adults and 17% of children are inactive.²⁶

Approximately a third of the population of SPA 6 is obese. 29% of children in grades 5, 7, and 9 and 35% of adults are obese. Diabetes is highest in SPA 6 when compared to the rest of Los Angeles County. 12% of adults are diagnosed in their lifetimes and 39 adults per 100,000 die a year from the disease.²⁷

Educational Attainment

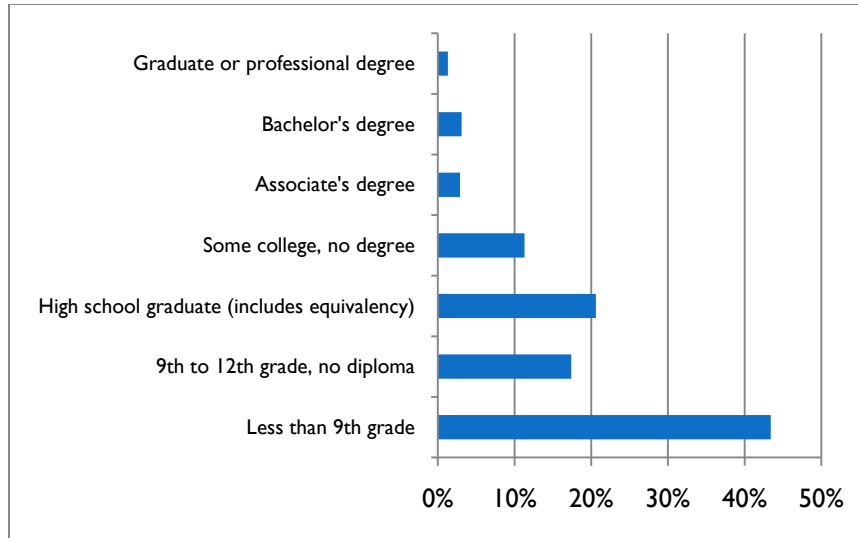
Florence-Firestone's population is relatively undereducated. In 2006-2008, 39 percent of people 25 years and over had at least graduated from high school and 4 percent had a bachelor's degree or higher. Sixty-one percent were dropouts, meaning they were not enrolled in school and had not graduated from high school.²⁸ As shown in the chart below, almost half the population has less than a 9th grade education.

²⁵ Los Angeles Times, <http://projects.latimes.com/mapping-la/neighborhoods/neighborhood/florence-firestone/crime/#six-months>

²⁶ Los Angeles County Key Indicators of Health, 2009. <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/docs/keyindicators.pdf>

²⁷ Ibid

²⁸ US Census. www.census.gov.



Community Facilities, Services and Infrastructure

Existing community facilities, services, and infrastructure provide residents of Florence-Firestone with a variety of programs and opportunities. This section summarizes available community resources.

Community Facilities

Community centers, parks, and schools are among Florence-Firestone's community facilities. As shown in the map, these facilities are located throughout the community and provide each neighborhood with distinct places for education, recreation, and other services (See Map 8: Public Uses and Facilities).

Florence-Firestone Community Service Center

Located at 7807 S. Compton Avenue, the Florence/Firestone Community Service Center serves as a "county hall" in the community. The multi-purpose facility provides comprehensive

human services to residents including computer classes, consumer assistance, mediation and conflict resolution, transportation assistance, assistance with emergency food and utility bills, classes on computers and home ownership, job referrals and training, nutrition and fitness training, and senior citizen activities and services.²⁹

The center underwent a \$5.4 million renovation and was re-opened in June 2010.³⁰ As part of the renovation, artist and photographer, Willie Robert Middlebrook created a mural for the entrance lobby, which depicts the ethnic diversity of the community, as well as landmarks and local plant and animal life.³¹

Schools

According to the United States Census, 21,000 students were enrolled in schools in Florence-Firestone from 2006-2008. 2,800 students were enrolled in nursery school and kindergarten, while 15,000 were enrolled in elementary or high school. College or graduate school enrollment was 2,300.³²

The community contains five elementary schools, two middle schools, and one high school. The table below identifies each school name and location.³³

| School | Address |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| McKinley Elementary School | 7812 McKinley Avenue |
| Miramonte Elementary School | 1400 East 68 th St. |
| Parmelee Elementary School | 1338 East 76 th Place |

²⁹ Los Angeles County Community and Social Services.

<http://css.lacounty.gov/florencefirestone-service-center.aspx>

³⁰ Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas. <http://ridley-thomas.lacounty.gov/blog/?cat=98>

³¹ Los Angeles County Arts Commission.

<http://www.lacountyarts.org/civcart/projectdetails/id/142#highres>

³² US Census. www.census.gov.

³³ Florence-Firestone Chamber of Commerce.

http://www.florencefirestonechamber.org/directory_services.html

| | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Russell Elementary School | 1263 Firestone Boulevard |
| Florence Avenue Elementary School | 7211 Bell Avenue Los Angeles |
| Drew Middle School | 5909 Lillian St. |
| Edison Middle School | 6500 Hooper Ave. |
| Animo Pat Brown Charter High School | 8255 Beach Street |

Parks

Florence-Firestone has 70.7 acres of parkland. In 2007, the community had a deficit of 245 acres of local parkland and 343 acres of regional parkland, based on Los Angeles County Draft General Plan standards (4 acres/1,000 residents in unincorporated areas and 6 acres/1,000 residents of total County population). The five community parks are classified as follows:

- Community Regional Park: Parks suggested to be 20-100 acres or 6 acres/1,000 people serving an area of up to 20 miles. Parks that include passive amenities, active sports activities, and additional facilities such as restrooms, community buildings, and gymnasiums.
- Neighborhood Park: Parks suggested to be 3-10 acres or 4 acres/1,000 people serving an area of ½ mile. Parks include passive and active sports amenities and facilities such as restrooms, parking, and information kiosks.
- Pocket Park. Parks suggested to be ¼ acre or less or 4 acres/1,000 persons with no service radius area. Parks can include plazas, rest areas, playgrounds, landmarks, and public art installations.³⁴

³⁴ Draft Florence-Firestone Community Parks and Recreation Plan, Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation. October 2010.

Florence-Firestone's parks, including acreage and classifications, are identified in the table below.

| Park | Acreage | Park Classification |
|----------------------------|------------|---------------------|
| Franklin D. Roosevelt Park | 24.6 acres | Community Regional |
| Ted Watkins Park | 27.0 acres | Community Regional |
| Col. Leon Washington Park | 13.2 acres | Neighborhood |
| Mary McLeod Bethune Park | 5.3 acres | Neighborhood |
| El Parque Nuestro | 0.6 acres | Pocket Park |

Library

Two Los Angeles Public Libraries serve Florence-Firestone. Opened in 1914 in a private home, the Florence Library is now located at 1610 E. Florence Avenue. The facility was refurbished from 2001 to 2002 and currently includes 55,739 books, 70 magazine and newspaper subscriptions, 4,410 audio recordings and 4,703 video recordings in English and Spanish, located within a 5,145 square foot facility. The library provides reference services, Internet access, bilingual story time, a homework center, year round reading activities, and a photocopy machine. Established in 1915, the Graham Library was refurbished between 2000 and 2001 and is now located at 1900 E. Firestone Avenue. The current collection includes 59,831 books, 4,837 audio recordings, 4,605 video recordings and 71 magazine and newspaper subscriptions in English and Spanish. The library offers Internet access, year-round activities and reading programs for children, and a homework center within a 5,145 square foot facility.³⁵

³⁵ LA County Library. <http://www.colapublib.org/libs/florence/>.

Health Care Facilities

Located in Los Angeles County Department of Public Health's Service Planning Area (SPA) 6, Florence-Firestone residents have access to two local public health centers. The South Health Center, located at 1522 E. 102nd Street provides immunizations, sexually transmitted disease evaluation and treatment, tuberculosis evaluation and treatment, communicable disease investigation, death certificates, environmental health services, and rodent inspections. Located at 3834 S. Western Avenue, the Ruth Temple Health Center provides immunizations, sexually transmitted disease evaluation and treatment, veterinary health services, and environmental health services.³⁶

Services

Residents of Florence-Firestone are served by the following County service providers.

Sheriff

The Century Sheriff Station, located at 11703 Alameda Street, in the City of Lynwood, provides law enforcement services to the Florence-Firestone community. The Century Station offers several community programs, including the reserve, crime prevention, volunteer, and explorer programs, which provides academy type training on law enforcement for young adults ages 15 to 21.³⁷

The Sherriff also runs the Youth Activity League at 7901 S. Compton Avenue. The League is housed in the former Florence Sheriff's Station. Opened in 1955, the Station was the first in the county where African American deputies were allowed to ride in patrol cars and the first to be commanded by an African American Captain. The

Station was converted into a teen center after its closure in 1994.³⁸ The Youth Activity League assists low and moderate income families with sports and community activities for children ages 6-18. The program provides a learning center, competitive sports and community activities to youth in partnership with law enforcement officers, with the aim of building community pride and trust, and decreasing delinquent type behavior.³⁹ Programs include tutoring, computer skills, karate, soccer, hip hop dance, folk ballet, music, drama, basketball, tackle football, boxing, soap box derby racing, field trips, and more.⁴⁰

Fire Protection

Florence-Firestone is served by two Fire Stations. Fire Station 16, located at 8010 S. Compton Avenue, and Station 164, located at 6301 S. Santa Fe Avenue, respond to fires and other emergencies in the community. The Stations also provide a safe haven to anyone who encounters a threatening situation.⁴¹

Child Care

According to Los Angeles County Office of Child Care estimates, Florence-Firestone has a shortfall of centers and family child care for infants, a shortfall of family child care for pre-school age children, and a shortfall of centers for school age children.⁴² The table below provides data on existing facilities and surpluses or shortfalls for infants, preschoolers, and school-age children.

³⁸ Los Angeles Times. http://articles.latimes.com/print/1993-12-19/news/ci-3984_1

³⁹ Los Angeles County Sherriff. http://www.lasdhq.org/stations/comm-progrms/WebCPPs_Stations_Century.pdf

⁴⁰ Los Angeles County Sherriff. <http://www.la-sheriff.org/releases/199a-yalscholarships.htm>

⁴¹ Los Angeles County Fire Department. <http://fire.lacounty.gov/HometownFireStations/HometownFireStations.asp>

⁴² LA County Office of Child Care 2006 Child Care Needs Assessment Reporting Tool. <http://gismap.co.la.ca.us/childcare> 549 Exempt capacity for some zip codes

³⁶ Los Angeles County Department of Public Health. <http://www.lapublichealth.org/spa6/hcenters.htm>

³⁷ Los Angeles County Sherriff. <http://la-sheriff.org/stations/for2/century/>

| | | | | | Use by Type | | Licensed Capacity | | Surplus or Shortfall | |
|----------------------|--------------------|----------------------|--------|-------------------|----------------|--------|-------------------|--------|----------------------|--|
| | Number of Children | With Working Parents | Center | Family Child Care | License Exempt | Center | Family Child Care | Center | Family Child Care | |
| Infant Estimates | 3088 | 1091 | 227 | 161 | 704 | 166 | 22 | -60 | -138 | |
| Pre-School Estimates | 5903 | 2086 | 276 | 1321 | 487 | 315 | 571 | 38 | -753 | |
| School Age Estimates | 9677 | 3519 | 236 | 696 | 2589 | 178 | 1 | -58 | 0 | |

Infrastructure

Solid Waste Disposal

Consolidated Disposal Service, LLC provides solid waste disposal services to the community.⁴³

Transportation

The Metro Blue Line roughly bisects Florence-Firestone and provides direct access to Downtown Los Angeles and Long Beach with three stations located within the community: the Florence Station, Firestone Station, and Slauson Station. Several Metro Bus lines also run throughout the community, providing additional linkages to neighboring cities and destinations.

In addition to the Metro Blue Line, Florence-Firestone has access to Pasadena in the North and San Pedro in the South via the 110 Harbor Freeway. The Freeway can be accessed by one of the community's several major east-west streets, including Slauson Avenue, Gage Avenue, Florence Avenue, Firestone Boulevard, and 92nd Street. Major north-south streets include Central Avenue,

Hooper Avenue, Compton Avenue, and Alameda Street. In 2010 Los Angeles County continued major improvements to Florence Avenue from Central Avenue to Mountain View Avenue. Improvements include street resurfacing, new sidewalks, trees, and attractive street medians. Future planned improvements will include community archways, monuments, and banners (See Map 9: Transportation Infrastructure).⁴⁴

Water Delivery

Water is provided to Florence-Firestone by the Golden State Water Company, located at 7105 Eastern Avenue in Bell Gardens.⁴⁵

Sewers

The Los Angeles County Department of Public Works South Yard, located at 1129 E. 59th Street provides sewer maintenance services to Florence-Firestone.⁴⁶

⁴³ Los Angeles County Department of Public Works.
<http://gis.dpw.lacounty.gov/servicelocator/FacilityResult2.cfm>

⁴⁴ Los Angeles County Chief Administrative Office.
<http://cao.lacounty.gov/OUAS/pdf/Community%20Connection/2010/Florence%20Firestone-English.pdf>

⁴⁵ Los Angeles County Department of Public Works.
<http://gis.dpw.lacounty.gov/servicelocator/FacilityResult2.cfm>

⁴⁶ Los Angeles County Department of Public Works.
dpw.lacounty.gov/general/facilities/app_sewer.cfm

Regulatory Setting

State

In California, community plans, also referred to as area plans, are parts of the general plan and focus on a particular region or community (Florence-Firestone) within the overall general plan area (Los Angeles County). The community plan refines the policies of the general plan as they apply to a smaller geographic area and is implemented by ordinances and other discretionary actions, such as zoning.

While general plans are subject to a variety of state and federal regulations, state guidelines say little explicitly about community plans; thus, most of the guidance comes by application of relevant general plan regulations published by the state Office of Planning and Reporting. Following are the key findings from a thorough review of current state guidelines.

Definition of Community Plan

According to California Public Resources Code Section 21083.3, a community plan applies to a defined geographic portion of the total area included in the general plan. Part of the General Plan, the community plan must include or reference each of the mandatory elements specified in Section 65302 of the Government Code. It contains specific development policies and implementation measures which will apply those policies to each involved parcel.

Public Participation

State law mandates citizen involvement in general plan preparation “through public hearings and any other means the city or county deems appropriate” (§65351). The public should be involved in the formulation of objectives to help make sure that they reflect community values.

Public Review and Hearings

Public review of the draft plan and the draft environmental document are normally conducted concurrently. The entire general plan proposal must be considered by the planning commission at a public hearing before it takes formal action on a general plan or a general plan amendment (§65353). A recommendation by the planning commission to approve a general plan or an amendment must be made by not less than a majority of its total membership (§65354). The legislative body (i.e., city council or board of supervisors) must likewise hold at least one public hearing on the general plan and the recommendations of the planning commission before taking formal action (§65355). At least 10 days prior to each of these hearings, the local government must give public notice of the time and place of the public hearing by publishing an ad in a newspaper of general circulation (§65353, §65355, and §65090).

Coordinating Intergovernmental Collaboration

State law requires local governments to work not only with citizens, but also with other governmental agencies and public utility companies in preparing and implementing their general plans (§65103(e)(f), §65351, and §65352). Upon request, a city must refer a proposal to amend or adopt a general plan or zoning ordinance to a county whose planning review area would be affected by the action. A county must do the same for an affected city (§65919 and §65919.3). A local planning agency is entitled to review for consistency with its general plan real property acquisitions for public works, real property dispositions, and proposed public buildings or structures as specified by §65402(b)(c). These are actions and projects undertaken by another city, county, or local agency within the reviewing agency’s jurisdiction. Cities and counties should also consult with tribal governments within their planning area.

Submitting Plans to State Agencies

State law and selected regulations require cities and counties to send copies of their general plan documents to selected state agencies for review. Every city and county must consult with: the California Geological Survey and the Office of Emergency Services regarding

the safety element; the State Board of Forestry and every local agency that provides fire protection (Public Resources Code §4128.5); State Mining and Geology Board for review and comment on proposed mineral resource management policies; and, the Secretary of the Resources Agency regarding open-space elements (§65563). Local governments must respond to the findings of these agencies as specified in §65302(g).

Jurisdictions may seek input from other state agencies besides those cited above. Agencies such as CalTrans, the Department of Fish and Game, the Department of Conservation, the Office of Emergency Services, and the Regional Water Quality Control Board often have a major interest in the consequences of local planning. As a matter of intergovernmental coordination, cities and counties should send copies of their draft general plans to their state contacts.

As a final requirement, under the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines, local jurisdictions must submit draft EIRs for general plans, elements, and amendments to the State Clearinghouse within the Office of Planning and Research to allow review by state agencies (Title 14, California Code of Regulations, §15161.6). (Jurisdictions are not required to submit Initial Studies/Negative Declarations to the State Clearinghouse.) While not required by law, planning agencies may send a copy of a newly adopted or revised general plan or element, along with subsequent amendments, to the County Municipal Collection in the State Library's Government Publications Section. The library makes general plans available to the public for reference.

Adopting the Plan or Update

A community plan is adopted by resolution as an amendment to the general plan (as in §65350, et seq).

County

General Plan

A community plan may provide greater detail to general plan policies affecting development in a defined area. It need not address

mandatory general plan issues that are most effectively addressed on a jurisdiction-wide basis; however, a community plan must reference these elements. The general plan should explicitly discuss the role of community plans, and each community plan should discuss its specific relationship to the general plan.

A community plan must be internally consistent with the general plan of which it is a part, meaning all principles, goals, objectives, policies and plan proposals set forth in the community plan must work within the overall general plan. To simplify implementation, community plans and the general plan should share a uniform format for land use categories, terminology, and diagrams. According to the Los Angeles County Draft General Plan, the General Plan provides the land use vision for the County while community planning allows for more detailed and issue-specific planning that builds upon the General Plan and allows communities to refine land use policy at a local level.

The first major update of the Los Angeles County General Plan in 25 years is currently underway. The 2008 Draft General Plan guides the creation of community plans through its land use designations, three point land use plan, and community-based planning program. The land use designations provide a menu of uses and densities to guide development of land in unincorporated LA County. The County Land Use Three Point Plan identifies strategies for smart growth, environmental management, and healthy and livable communities to direct more specific land use planning and decision-making. The community-based planning program identifies five components to guide community-based planning: community participation, county participation, inter-departmental participation, plan formulation, and zoning consistency.

Relationship to the General Plan and Countywide Objectives

A component of the Los Angeles County General Plan, the Florence-Firestone Community Plan will refine the countywide goals and policies in the General Plan by addressing specific issues relevant to Florence-Firestone. The General Plan provides countywide goals,

policies, and implementation actions for seven state-mandated elements (land use, circulation, housing, conservation, open space, noise, and safety) and three additional elements (air resources, public services and facilities, and economic development).

The Community Plan applies to a defined geographic portion of the total area included in the General Plan, the Florence-Firestone community, and will contain specific development policies and implementation measures dealing with change applicable only to Florence-Firestone. While consistent with the elements found in the General Plan, the Community Plan can also address additional community issues and provide more specific guidance on elements already found in the General Plan. The General Plan provides policy guidance on all issues not addressed in the Community Plan. The Community Plan does not replace the General Plan in Florence-Firestone. Rather, it complements the broad, countywide goals and policies found in the General Plan with specific guidance on local issues in a manner consistent with the framework established in the General Plan.

An important component of the General Plan, the Community Plan will also help to further the countywide objective of reducing greenhouse gases in order to meet the goals of Assembly Bill 32, or the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006, and Senate Bill 375, or the California's Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act. These Acts establish a statewide comprehensive program of regulatory and market mechanisms to achieve reductions of greenhouse gases. Los Angeles County has undertaken countywide measures to address the mandates of the Act, including adoption of the Green Building, Drought Tolerant Landscaping, and Low Impact Development Ordinances in 2008. The Community Plan will strengthen these efforts by including goals and policies to support local development practices and initiatives to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Housing Element

Under housing element requirements (§65583), local governments must identify and analyze existing and projected housing needs and inventory the resources and constraints relevant to meeting those needs. The contents of the element must include: population, employment and housing need trends; household and housing characteristics; land suitable for residential development and redevelopment; governmental and non-governmental constraints; special housing needs; and, opportunities for energy conservation. Projection of the community's housing needs should be consistent with the regional housing needs assessment prepared by the regional governing body (Council of Government) or the housing and community development agency (Community Development Commission).

LA County Ordinances

In addition to adopted plans and State laws, ordinances for the unincorporated areas affect local planning. Adopted by the Board of Supervisors on August 8, 2008 the Density Bonus Ordinance provides a menu of incentives, including increased density, for the development of affordable housing. Adopted by the Board of Supervisors on July 1, 2008, the Mixed Use Ordinance amends the zoning code to modify certain commercial zones to allow mixed use projects (residential/commercial) and joint live and work projects through an administrative procedure. Finally, adopted on October 7, 2008 the Green Program includes three ordinances that require certain new developments to comply with low impact development, drought tolerant landscaping, and green building requirements.

Community Participation Process

Community participation is at the heart of the planning process. In Florence-Firestone, the Vision Plan was developed in partnership with Florence-Firestone community leaders and through a series of public workshops.

On January 10, 2009 community members participated in a workshop to identify existing issues and prioritize long-term goals for the community. Participants answered four questions: “where do you live?”; “where do you work?”; “what are the key issues in the community?”; and “what three things do you wish for the future?”.

The top ten priority goals from the workshop were:

1. Improve public safety
2. Enhance services for youth, seniors, and the disabled
3. Attract more supermarkets, restaurants, and shopping
4. Preserve existing and attract new jobs
5. Enhance job training
6. Reduce trash and graffiti
7. Address Code violations
8. Create identifiable image for Florence-Firestone
9. Enhance Florence Mile
10. Enhance neighborhoods

The second workshop was held on February 21, 2009. The purpose of this workshop was to identify areas for potential land use changes in the community and prioritize a series of actions that would enhance “community identity.” Participants were presented with three alternative development patterns for six areas of the community. Each group selected whether they wanted the areas to be maintained, enhanced, or transformed. Each group also voted on activities to enhance community identity.

The last workshop was held on March 28, 2009. The purpose was to review and comment on the overall community vision and prioritize implementation actions. The Vision Plan was presented and participants provided overall feedback. Next, participants voted on

actions to implement the Vision. The following are the top three actions in each category:

- Florence-Mile and Station: conduct regular street and sidewalk cleaning, complete streetscape improvements, expand library
- Center of Community: improve appearance of buildings, improve pedestrian bridge, create “county hall”
- Neighborhoods and Housing: create neighborhood watch groups, expand homeownership programs, implement alley improvement program
- Corridors: install “welcome signs” at major entryways, increase code enforcement, build affordable/senior housing
- Alameda Corridor and Industrial Areas: develop streetscape improvement program, create an identity, redevelop underutilized and nonconforming parcels
- Jobs and Economic Development: create job training program, industrial business and development strategy, retail demand and attraction plan
- Parks and Open Space: increase public safety, use schools as playgrounds, develop community gardens
- Transportation: improve bus stops, pedestrian safety and access to Blue Line, and pedestrian safety around schools

The outreach conducted for the Vision Plan set the foundation for the participatory process. Development of the Community Plan will also include extensive outreach.

Conclusion

Florence-Firestone is a community with a rich history and a promising future. From its origin as a farming area, its development as a place where people could live and work in industry, and its evolution to a diverse place supporting a variety of local businesses, the community has changed dramatically over time. Today, Florence-Firestone faces many challenges, but also benefits from many assets. This background report provides detailed information on both the

challenges and opportunities in the community today. It also provides estimates and projections on how the community may change in the future, with the intent of establishing a foundation for informed planning decisions.

Maps

- 1: Context
- 2: Land Use
- 3: Zoning
- 4: Zoning and Land Use
- 5: Zoning and Land Use Consistency
- 6: Year Built
- 7: Density
- 8: Public Uses and Facilities
- 9: Transportation Infrastructure